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## **Chapter 9**

### ***Intercultural communication in Sarawak: Language use of the Chinese language speaking communities***

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*This chapter begins with a description of the sociocultural background of Sarawak, a Malaysian state located on the island of Borneo, before providing the historical and social context of the Chinese-language speaking communities. The second part of the chapter presents empirical research findings on the language used for intercultural communication by the Chinese speech communities in the family, transactional and employment domains. The chapter ends with an outline of the language use of the Chinese speech communities in the legal, mass media and religious domains.*

#### **Sociocultural Background of Sarawak**

Sarawak is a Malaysian state located on the island of Borneo, flanked by Malaysian Sabah in the northeast and Indonesian Kalimantan in the south. Sarawak has a population of 2.07 million (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2009). The largest ethnic group in Sarawak is the Iban comprising 29.1% of the Sarawak population, followed by the Chinese (25.9%) and the